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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

1 June 1949

INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM NO. 169

SUBJECT: The Probability of Local Interference with the Production and Movement of Certain Strategic Materials in the Event of War.

1. The attached estimates (Enclosures A-I) relate only to the probability of local interference, by Communists or others (such as disaffected nationalists in colonial areas), with the production and movement of the strategic materials indicated in each case, in the event of war between the United States and the USSR before 1953.
2. Significant interference is defined as an at least 15 percent reduction in availability over a period of at least one month.
3. The order of the Enclosures is as follows:
 - A. General Considerations (p. 3)
 - B. Canada (p. 5)
 - C. Mexico (p. 6)
 - D. The Caribbean (p. 7)
 - E. South America: West Coast (p. 9)
 - F. South America: East Coast (p. 10)
 - G. Southern Africa (p. 11)
 - H. The Mediterranean and Near East (p. 12)
 - I. India and the Far East (p. 13)
4. A significant possibility of local interference with the production or movement of listed commodities (not necessarily resulting in long term denial) is considered to exist in the following cases:
 - a. CANADA: iron ore, lead, lumber, pulpwood, zinc.
 - b. MEXICO: antimony, cadmium, copper, fluorspar, graphite, LEAD, manganese, MERCURY, mica, petroleum, zinc.
 - c. CUBA: molasses and sugar, chromite, nickel oxide.
 - d. COLOMBIA: petroleum.
 - e. VENEZUELA: PETROLEUM.
 - f. ECUADOR: RALSA, cocoa beans.
 - g. PERU: lead, vanadium.
 - h. BOLIVIA: ANTIMONY, lead, TIN, tungsten.
 - i. CHILE: COPPER, CRUDE IODINE, sodium nitrates, iron ore.
 - j. BRAZIL: castor beans, coffee, cinchona, MANGANESE, sisal.
 - k. ARGENTINA: beef, hides, skins.

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 NO CHANGE IN CLASS. ☐
 X DECLASSIFIED
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Note: This memorandum has not been coordinated with the intelligence organizations of the Departments of State, Army, Navy, and the Air Force.

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- 1. SARDINIA: talc.
- 2. IRAQ: petroleum
- 3. BURMA, SIAM, MALAYA: rubber, teak, tin.
- 4. INDONESIA: palm oil, pepper, quinine, rubber
- 5. CHINA: antimony, duck feathers, hog bristles, tin, and tungsten.

5. With respect to other listed commodities, no significant interference is likely, although sporadic strikes and sabotage are probable.

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ENCLOSURE "A"

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

1. The USSR, through the apparatus of international Communism, has made and is making extensive preparations to interfere with the production and movement of strategic materials required by the United States. It must be expected to exert to the full its capabilities in this regard in the event of war.

2. Absolute denial of newly produced strategic materials requires Communist (Soviet) seizure of control over the means of production or export, as is occurring in China. Temporary or partial interference, of greater or less duration and magnitude, can be accomplished by instigating public disorder, work stoppages, slowdowns, or sabotage.

3. Communist capabilities in these respects vary with local circumstances not necessarily related to local Communist strength or to the vulnerability of the industry concerned. It must be recognized that disorders, strikes, and even sabotage affecting the availability of strategic materials can occur for strictly local reasons without Communist instigation, and that a wartime demand for strategic materials presents an inviting opportunity for exacting the redress of local grievances. It is to be expected, however, that the USSR and local Communists will take every advantage of such local dissatisfactions to accomplish their own ulterior purpose. Because any systematic and sustained interference with US access to strategic materials normally pre-supposes at least covert Communist direction or influence, Communist party strength and labor influence have been taken as the point of departure of our country estimates in most cases.

4. Control of or dominant influence in organized labor is Communism's principal weapon for the accomplishment of this mission. Communist penetration of organized labor has been significantly selective, with concentration on mining, fuel and power, electrical communications, overland transport, waterfront, and maritime workers' unions. In many cases it will be found that the Communists, lacking control of basic production, nevertheless control availability through their control of essential fuel and power, transportation, or port facilities.

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5. In addition to Communist capabilities for the local instigation of disorder, work stoppage, or sabotage, account must be taken of the possibility of planned sabotage by trained Soviet agents introduced from the outside on specific mission. This factor, although relatively difficult to estimate, is especially important with respect to highly remunerative targets such as Venezuelan oil. Whatever the security precautions in each case, and the consequent probabilities, the possibility of a successful and severely damaging coup of this sort can never be entirely excluded.

6. The following estimates do not take into account the possibility of Soviet resort to clandestine biological warfare as a form of sabotage, on the supposition that Soviet capabilities in this regard will be covered in another place. This form of attack, if feasible, could obviously have a severe effect on the production and export of strategic materials, directly in the case of animal and vegetable products, and indirectly in terms of its effect on human resources.

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ENCLOSURE "B"

CANADA

1. Products designated. The Canadian products listed are aluminum, asbestos, cobalt, corundum, hides, ilmenite, iron ore, lead, lumber, mica, newsprint, nickel, petroleum, platinum metals, pulpwood, uranium, woodpulp, and zinc.
2. Communist strength and influence. The Communist Party, outlawed in 1939, now operates as the Labor Progressive Party, with an estimated 23,000 members. Its influence is extended through labor unions, foreign language groups, and front organizations. It has had little political success, however, and has been weakened by the espionage trials of 1946 and the exposure of its infiltration of labor unions. Its influence in organized labor appears to have passed its peak. Nevertheless, it does still control important lumbermen's, miners', and seamen's unions.
3. Iron Ore. Plant protection is believed to be normal, but the producing labor union is Communist-dominated and there is a corresponding danger of serious work stoppage, if not of sabotage. Moreover, the ore is shipped via the Great Lakes and its movement could be seriously interrupted if the emergency arose during the summer shipping season. (This danger would be lessened if wartime controls had been put into effect before the reopening of traffic in the spring.)
4. Lead and Zinc. The producing union is Communist-dominated and plant protection is admittedly inadequate. In these circumstances, serious work stoppage and/or sabotage are to be expected.
5. Lumber and pulpwood. The dispersed and primitive character of the industry renders it relatively immune to sabotage, but the producing union is Communist-dominated and significant interference through work stoppages is possible. (The effect of such stoppages would depend on the season: normally cut wood is accumulated during the winter to be floated downstream in the spring.)
6. Other products. No significant interference is indicated, except insofar as denial of pulpwood might interfere with the production of newsprint and woodpulp.

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ENCLOSURE "C"

MEXICO

1. Products designated. The Mexican products listed are antimony, cadmium, copper, fluorspar, graphite, LEAD, mahogany, manganese, MERCURY, mica, petroleum, and zinc.
2. Work Stoppages. Communist influence is extensive among Mexican mining and petroleum, electrical, railroad, and port workers. Significant interference with the production and transportation of the mineral products listed above, through work stoppages, is probable in the event of war. It is unlikely, however, that such interference could be prolonged. The Government has recently shown itself capable of dealing effectively with Communist labor leaders. Its security forces are considered reliable and generally adequate to support a strong policy. An eventual nationalistic, anti-Communist reaction among rank-and-file workers is to be expected.
3. Sabotage. Few restraints are put upon the movement of foreigners into and in Mexico. Planned sabotage of remunerative targets by militant Communists or trained Soviet agents is probable. The Poza Rica oil field, producing 60 percent of Mexican petroleum, is particularly vulnerable in this respect.
4. Mahogany. Mexico presently forbids commercial cutting of mahogany. Were production to be resumed, no significant interference would be likely.

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ENCLOSURE "D"

THE CARIBBEAN

1. Products designated. The products listed with respect to this area are:

- a. CUBA: molasses and sugar, chromite, nickel oxide.
- b. JAMAICA: bauxite.
- c. HAITI: sisal.
- d. DOMINICAN REPUBLIC: cocoa beans.
- e. CENTRAL AMERICA and PANAMA: ABACA, balsa, mahogany.
- f. COLOMBIA: petroleum, platinum.
- g. VENEZUELA: PETROLEUM, diamonds.

2. Cuba. The Communist Party is one of the largest, best-organized, and best-disciplined in Latin America. It has a nucleus of 55,000 militants and counts on about 150,000 popular votes. Its leaders are experienced and able. Its major weapon is its influence in organized labor. Significant interference through strikes, slow-downs, and sabotage must therefore be expected. Sugar production is peculiarly liable to sabotage through the firing of cane fields.

3. Jamaica. There has been social unrest in Jamaica, but no well-defined Communist movement. Inasmuch as the production of bauxite is as yet undeveloped, no specific assessment can be made with respect to that industry. Probably there would be no significant interference.

4. Haiti. No significant interference is to be expected.

5. Dominican Republic. No significant interference is to be expected.

6. Central America and Panama. No significant interference is to be expected.

7. Colombia. Communist influence is important in the Colombian oil workers' unions, which in the past have conducted prolonged strikes affecting petroleum production, processing, and transportation. The capabilities of those unions have not decreased, nor has the government's ability to cope with them increased. Significant

interference with petroleum production and movement must therefore be expected. With respect to platinum, however, no significant interference is indicated.

8. Venezuela. Communist influence is particularly strong in the labor unions concerned with petroleum production and transportation. There is serious danger of significant interference through strikes and sabotage. The target, moreover, is one to attract trained Soviet saboteurs on specific mission. In the past, however, the Venezuelan government has dealt firmly and effectively with labor disturbances in the industry. With its cooperation in carrying out projected security measures the danger of serious sabotage can probably be controlled. No significant interference is indicated with respect to diamonds.

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ENCLOSURE "E"

SOUTH AMERICA: WEST COAST

1. Products designated. The products listed with respect to this area are:

- a. ECUADOR: BALSA, cocoa beans.
- b. PERU: chinchona bark, lead, mahogany, vanadium.
- c. BOLIVIA: ANTIMONY, lead, TIN, tungsten.
- d. CHILE: COPPER, CRUDE IODINE, sodium nitrates, iron ore.

2. Ecuador. Communists control the important port workers' unions. Security forces are neither effective nor reliable. Significant interference through strikes and sabotage are to be expected.

3. Peru. The Communist Party, never strong, is outlawed and disorganized. Communist influence exists, however, among mine, railroad, and port workers. Peruvian production and transportation of lead and vanadium are notably vulnerable to strikes and sabotage. Significant interference must therefore be expected although it is unlikely to be prolonged. No such interference is indicated with respect to chinchona bark and mahogany.

4. Bolivia. Communist influence is insignificant, but labor unrest exists. The mine and railroad workers' unions are well organized and have conducted prolonged strikes. The government's handling of these difficulties was weak and ineffective. Bolivian mining and railroad operations are extremely vulnerable to sabotage. Significant interference through strikes and sabotage is therefore possible.

5. Chile. The Communist Party, though outlawed, is estimated to number up to 50,000 members. It retains control of the Federation of Miners and has infiltrated railroad, port, and electrical workers' unions. Moreover, existing conditions are conducive to labor unrest. The security forces, however, are vigilant and effective. No prolonged work stoppage is deemed likely. Significant, though limited, interference through sabotage is probable, however.

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ENCLOSURE "F"

SOUTH AMERICA: EAST COAST

1. Products designated. The products listed with respect to this area are:

- a. THE GUIANAS: BAUXITE.
- b. BRAZIL: BERYL, castor oil, cocoa beans, coffee, diamonds, emetine, iron ore, MANGANESE, mica, monazite, platinum, QUARTZ CRYSTAL, sisal, tantalum.
- c. URUGUAY: grease wool, hides, and skins.
- d. ARGENTINA: beef, corundum, hides and skins, quebracho extract, tungsten, grease wool.

2. The Guianas. No significant interference is indicated.

3. Brazil. The Communist Party, though outlawed, retains effective organization and leadership and an estimated 90,000 members. Its strength is concentrated in the capital and the states of Sao Paulo, and Pernambuco. Its influence is particularly strong among port workers and is also felt among railroad workers and manganese miners. Social and economic problems afford it opportunities for fomenting local strikes, disorders, and sabotage. Security forces, however, are actively engaged in its suppression and are considered able to check any widespread and concerted interference with production and transportation. Nevertheless, significant interference with the production of manganese and with the shipment of castor beans, coffee, emetine, manganese, and sisal must be considered possible, though such interference is likely to be sporadic and brief in each case.

4. Uruguay. No significant interference is indicated.

5. Argentina. The Communist Party, although not large numerically, has experienced leaders and a fairly large number of sympathizers including the 35,000 Slavs who belong to the Soviet-sponsored Union Eslava. The Party's strength is concentrated in the city and province of Buenos Aires. It has lost ground in the labor movement generally, but still has particular influence among railway, port, and meat-packing workers. The government can be expected to take forceful action to halt or prevent extensive interference with production and export through strikes and sabotage. Nevertheless, significant interference with the production and shipment of meat, hides, and skins must be considered possible.

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ENCLOSURE "G"

SOUTHERN AFRICA
(South of 20° North)

1. Products designated. The products listed with respect to this area are:

- a. LIBERIA: LATEX.
- b. BRITISH WEST AFRICA: cocoa beans, COLUMBIUM, diamonds, mahogany, MANGANESE, palm oil, tantalum, and tin.
- c. BELGIAN CONGO: COBALT, columbium, copper, DIAMONDS, palm oil, pyrethrum flowers, tantalum, tin, URANIUM.
- d. SOUTH AFRICA: ASBESTOS, C.ROSITE, CORUNDUM, diamonds, MANGANESE, uranium, vanadium, grease wool, skins and wattle bark.
- e. RODEZIA: ASBESTOS, C.ROSITE, copper, platinum, and zinc.
- f. BRITISH EAST AFRICA: KYANITE, pyrethrum, flowers, SISAL.
- g. MADAGASCAR: beryl, GRAFITE, LICA.

2. Communist capabilities. No significant native Communist capability to interfere with the production or shipment of these commodities exists in any of the countries indicated.

3. Nationalistic disturbances. There is some possibility that nationalistic disturbances might interfere with production and shipment in BRITISH WEST AFRICA and MADAGASCAR. Given reasonable precautions, however, such disturbances could be limited in duration and effect.

4. Planned sabotage. The possibility of planned sabotage by agents dispatched on specific missions cannot be excluded in the case of especially remunerative targets. The BELGIAN CONGO is notably vulnerable in this respect, there being no effective border control between it and French Equatorial Africa.

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ENCLOSURE "A"

THE MEDITERRANEAN AND NEAR EAST

1. Products designated. The products listed with respect to this area are:

- a. PORTUGAL, SPAIN, FRANCE, NORTH AFRICA: cork.
- b. SARDINIA: talc.
- c. TURKEY: chromite, gum opium.
- d. EGYPT: extra long staple cotton.
- e. SAUDI ARABIA, KUWAIT, BAHRAIN, QATAR: petroleum.
- f. IRAQ: petroleum.
- g. IRAN: petroleum.

2. Portugal, Spain, French North Africa. Cork production is relatively immune to interference. Sporadic sabotage in port areas is possible.

3. Sardinia. Communist strength in Sardinia is considerable. Moreover, Sardinia has known sustained strikes accompanied by sabotage. Significant interference with talc production and shipment by these means is possible.

4. Turkey. Communism is not a significant force in Turkey. The security services are in effective control of such minor subversive elements as do exist. No significant interference is indicated, although sporadic sabotage is possible.

5. Egypt. There is social unrest in Egypt, but no significant Communist movement. Sporadic strikes and sabotage are possible, but no significant interference is unlikely.

6. Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar. No significant interference is indicated.

7. Iraq. Considerable disaffection and Communist influence exists in the petroleum producing area. Security forces are probably adequate to protect the main installations, but not field installations and pipelines, which are vulnerable to sabotage. Significant interference is therefore indicated.

8. Iran. A danger of Communist-instigated strikes and sabotage exists, but security forces are probably able to prevent significant local interference.

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ENCLOSURE "I"

INDIA AND THE FAR EAST

1. Products designated. The products listed with respect to this area are:

- a. INDIA & EAST PAKISTAN: beryl, burlap, kyanite, jute, LANGKATSE, mica, monazite, crude lac, shellac, tea, and skins.
- b. CEYLON: rubber
- c. BURMA, Siam, MALAYA: rubber, teak, and tin.
- d. INDONESIA: palm oil, pepper, petroleum, quinine and quinidine, rubber, and tin.
- e. CHINA: antimony, duck feathers, hog bristles, tin and tungsten.
- f. PHILIPPINES: chromite, coconut oil, mahogany, manila fiber, and sisal.
- g. AUSTRALIA: beef, beryl, copper, hides and skins, lead, monazite, grease wool, and zinc.
- h. NEW CALEDONIA: chrome, nickel.
- i. NEW ZEALAND: grease wool, skins.

2. India and East Pakistan. The Communists probably have no significant capability to interfere with the production of the commodities listed, but may be able to hinder their shipment. Prior to March 1949, Indian Communists were capable of disrupting the operation of railways and ports rather seriously for a period of several weeks by unannounced strikes and sabotage. Since then strong government action has rendered them relatively ineffective. A decline of Communist influence in organized labor has also been noted. Nevertheless, it is estimated that an all out Communist effort could still hinder the movement of strategic materials, especially manganese, mica, and jute products.

3. Ceylon. The Communists' capabilities for interference are limited to the Colombo port area, where they control approximately 35 percent of organized labor. It is believed, however, that this danger could be controlled except for the possibility of sporadic sabotage.

4. Burma. Production and shipment are now effectively disrupted by the armed insurrection of Communists and other elements. Present conditions, approaching anarchy, are likely to continue indefinitely.

5. Malaya. Communist insurgents are now interfering with production and transportation by terroristic attacks on estates and mines, and by obstruction of labor recruiting. Production levels are being maintained only with strenuous and costly effort.

6. Siam. Interference like that in Malaya is easily possible in Siam and the authorities would be less able to suppress or confine it.

7. Indonesia. A Communist threat, as such, does not exist in Indonesia, but within the area the situation in Java and Sumatra has been seriously disturbed by conflict between the Dutch and Indonesian nationalists. This conflict has resulted in widespread disorganization and destruction and is susceptible to Communist exploitation. At present Dutch control is reasonably secure in East Sumatra (petroleum, palm oil), Bangka and Billiton Islands (pepper, tin), Borneo (petroleum, rubber), and Celebes (rubber). Significant work stoppage and sabotage can occur, however, even in Dutch-occupied areas. Elsewhere in Sumatra and Java the production of palm oil, pepper, quinine, and rubber has been seriously disrupted. The prospects in Indonesia depend on the outcome of current negotiations between the Dutch and the Indonesians. In the best case, however, it will be some time before order is reestablished, production restored, and stability assured in Java and Sumatra.

8. China. It is probable that the Chinese Communists will completely control the production and marketing of the listed commodities before the end of 1949. The capability of denial will then be absolute, though actual denial may not occur for reasons of policy: Communist China will have need to maintain foreign trade. In the event of war, however, it must be presumed that Chinese policy would conform to Soviet requirements.

9. The Philippines. No significant interference is indicated, although there is a possibility of sporadic sabotage.

10. Australia. Communist capabilities are limited primarily to interference with the operation of railways and ports through domination of coal mining, transportation, and stevedoring labor unions. No significant interference with production is indicated except in the case of the principal lead-zinc properties, at Broken Hill, where the union is also Communist-dominated. Rank-and-file membership of these unions is overwhelmingly non-Communist, however, so that any work stoppages or slowdowns would have to be justified in terms of legitimate grievances in order to be sustained.

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11. New Caledonia. Local interference is not indicated. The production of nickel matte, however, is dependent on coal supplies normally received from Australia, which might be interfered with.

12. New Zealand. The only significant Communist capability is for interference with shipment through domination of the Waterside Workers Union. It is doubtful, however, that extended interference would be supported by the non-Communist rank-and-file membership of the union.

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